

Canada – Europe
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada – Europe

Report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

**Meeting with the Organization for Economic Co-operation
and Development (OECD)**

And

**Third Part of the 2022 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary
Assembly of the Council of Europe**

Paris and Strasbourg, France

From June 20 to 24 2022

REPORT

The Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association (CAEU) sent a delegation of six parliamentarians to Strasbourg, France to participate in the third part of the 2022 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Prior to arriving in Strasbourg, the delegation held a day of meetings with Canadian and international officials at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France. The delegates were Francesco Sorbara, M.P., President of CAEU; Hon. Pierre Dalphond, Senator; Stéphane Bergeron, M.P.; Larry Brock, M.P.; Anna Roberts, M.P., and Salma Zahid, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by the association secretary, Jessica Kulka, and an association adviser, Scott McTaggart.

MEETINGS AT THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

On 20 June 2022, the delegation held meetings at the OECD in Paris. The delegation first met with Ambassador Madeleine Chenette, Canada's Representative to the OECD, at the Permanent Delegation of Canada to the OECD. During the meeting, the Ambassador explained the functioning of the OECD and recent activities undertaken by her team. Delegates discussed current topics of interest at the OECD with the Ambassador, including the war in Ukraine, climate change, artificial intelligence, food security and the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the OECD headquarters, the delegation held a series of meetings with OECD officials. During the morning meeting, the delegation heard presentations on the global and Canadian economic outlook. The briefing on the global economic outlook focused on current challenges resulting from Russia's war on Ukraine, including energy security in Europe and global inflation, and the possibility of an economic recession in the near future. The briefing on the Canadian economic outlook noted Canada's strong first quarter performance in 2022 and the broad-based nature of inflation compared to other countries. OECD experts also discussed how Canada can increase economic productivity, including through reductions in internal barriers to trade, education and training, and the adoption of new technologies.

During the afternoon meetings, the delegation received a briefing on the OECD Global Parliamentary Network, which seeks to increase parliamentarians' participation in the work of the OECD, including through thematic working groups on tax and artificial intelligence. This was followed by a presentation on the OECD's work related to the spread of disinformation. OECD officials spoke about recent research on the topic and efforts in member countries to regulate digital platforms.

PARTICIPATION IN THE THIRD PART OF THE 2022 ORDINARY SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

From 21 to 24 June 2022, the delegation participated in the third part-session of PACE, for which Canada has observer status.

Overview of the Agenda of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

During the third part-session a wide range of topics were debated in the Assembly and in its committees. The Assembly held debates on the following:

- Progress report of the Bureau and the Standing Committee
- Observation of the presidential and early parliamentary elections in Serbia
- The role of political parties in fostering diversity and inclusion: a new Charter for a non-racist society
- Recent challenges to security in Europe: what role for the Council of Europe?
- The continuing need to restore human rights and the rule of law in the North Caucasus region
- Reported cases of political prisoners in the Russian Federation
- Preventing and combating antisemitism in Europe
- Humanitarian consequences and internal and external migration in connection with the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine
- Protection and alternative care for unaccompanied and separated migrant and refugee children
- Justice and security for women in peace reconciliation
- The honouring of membership obligations to the Council of Europe by Malta
- Ensuring accountability for the downing of flight MH17
- United Kingdom agreement on asylum seekers and the critical government reaction regarding the European Court of Human Rights decision
- Consequences of the blockade of the Black Sea
- Review of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Krygyz Republic
- Control of online communication: a threat to media pluralism, freedom of information and human dignity
- Fighting vaccine-preventable diseases through quality services and anti-vaccine myth-busting

The Assembly also heard from the following speakers:

- Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, Leader of Belarus opposition
- Pekka Haavisto, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland
- Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence of Ireland
- Her Excellency Katerina Sakellariopoulou, President of the Hellenic Republic
- His Majesty King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands

Canadian Activities During the Session

The members of the delegation actively participated in proceedings of the PACE, including plenary proceedings. In addition, delegates held bilateral meetings with other

member delegations and attended receptions hosted by Ireland and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Meeting with Poland's Delegation to PACE

On 21 June 2022, Mr. Sorbara, Mr. Bergeron and Mr. Brock held a bilateral meeting with the Chairperson of Poland's delegation to PACE, Arkadiusz Mularczyk, M.P. During the meeting, delegates heard about the plight of the estimated four million Ukrainian refugees currently in Poland and how Canada, and Canadian parliamentarians, could increase their support. A particular focus was placed on the 400,000 Ukrainian children and the difficulties they face in continuing their education.

The delegates also discussed energy security in Poland and the European Union (EU), and the possibility for increased Canadian energy exports, including small modular nuclear reactors. Mr. Mularczyk invited the delegation to attend an economic forum that Poland will host in October and the delegates discussed the possibility of conducting a bilateral visit to Poland.

Meeting with Ukraine's Delegation to PACE

Meetings with Ukrainian parliamentarians were held on 21 and 23 June 2022. On 21 June 2022, all Canadian delegates met with Mariia Mezentseva, M.P. and Chairperson of Ukraine's delegation, Larysa Bilozir, M.P., and Oleksii Goncharenko, M.P. On 23 June 2022, Mr. Sorbara, Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Brock and Ms. Roberts met again with Ms. Mezentseva, Ms. Bilozir as well as with Serhii Soboliev, M.P. and first Vice-Chairperson of Ukraine's delegation, and Sergiy Vlasenko, M.P.

During these meetings, delegates focused on Russia's war against Ukraine and how Canada can support Ukraine. Canadian delegates emphasized that Canada's assistance to Ukraine was supported by all political parties. Ukrainian delegates spoke of the need for increased support from all like-minded countries, including Canada, as the war with Russia was entering a difficult phase. According to delegates, Ukraine requires more military equipment, including heavy weapons; civilian items, such as medical supplies and vehicles; and financial support. Ukrainian delegates stated that the rebuilding of regions affected by the conflict should begin immediately, not once the conflict is over, to demonstrate to Ukrainians that the country has a bright future.

Ukrainian delegates also spoke about Ukraine's efforts, and continued desire, to join both the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (of which Canada is a member). In the context of the Council of Europe, the delegates also highlighted the recent ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) as demonstrating Ukraine's commitment to protecting human rights.

Meeting of the Women@PACE Group

On 21 June 2022, Ms. Roberts and Ms. Zahid attend a meeting of the Women@PACE group during which the issues of violence and stereotypes against women as well as the challenges facing women in the coming decade were discussed. Ms. Zahid provided the group with an overview of women's rights in Canada and informed the group about the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on women in Canada.

Meeting of the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence

On 22 June 2022, Ms. Roberts and Ms. Zahid attended a meeting of the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence. During the meeting, a panel debate was held on the topic of Developing mechanisms and concrete means to detect crimes of sexual violence of armed conflict and support the rehabilitation of survivors. The panel consisted of Dunja Mijatović, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Kateryna Pavlichenko, Deputy Minister of Interior of Ukraine, and Adrijana Hanušić Bećirović, Senior Legal Adviser, TRIAL International, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Canadian Interventions in Assembly Debates

All delegates participated in the Assembly's debates. They made 13 interventions during debates and tabled three speeches in writing. The texts of delegates speeches are available on the PACE website.¹

(a) Tuesday, 21 June 2022

Mr. Sorbara and Mr. Bergeron both spoke during debates on "Recent challenges to security in Europe: what role for the Council of Europe?" and "Reported cases of political prisoners in the Russian Federation." Ms. Zahid spoke during a debate on "Upholding democratic security in Europe." Senator Dalphond was unable to speak during this debate but tabled his remarks in writing.

(b) Wednesday, 22 June 2022

Mr. Brock submitted his speech in writing for a debate on "Preventing and combating antisemitism in Europe." Mr. Bergeron, Ms. Zahid, Mr. Sorbara and Ms. Roberts spoke during a joint debate on the "Humanitarian consequences and internal and external migration in connection with the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine," "Protection and alternative care for unaccompanied and separated migrant and refugee children," and "Justice and security for women in peace reconciliation."

(c) Thursday, 23 June 2022

Mr. Brock spoke during debates on "Ensuring accountability for the downing of flight MH17" and the "Consequences of the blockade of the Black Sea." Ms. Roberts spoke during a debate on "The control of online communication: a threat to media pluralism, freedom of information and human dignity."

(d) Friday, 24 June 2022

Ms. Roberts spoke during a debate on "Fighting vaccine-preventable diseases through quality services and anti-vaccine myth-busting."

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Francesco Sorbara, M.P.

President, Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

¹ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, "2022 – third part of the session," Verbatim listing by session.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Meeting with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Third Part of the 2022 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)
DESTINATION	Paris and Strasbourg, France
DATES	20 to 24 June 2022
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Pierre Dalphond
	Mr. Stéphane Bergeron
	Mr. Larry Brock
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Anna Roberts
	Mr. Francesco Sorbara
	Ms. Salma Zahid
STAFF	Ms. Jessica Kulka
	Mr. Scott McTaggart
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 51,755.82
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 11,677.69
HOSPITALITY	\$ 286.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 9,343.54
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 98.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 137.57
TOTAL	\$ 73,298.62